

February, 1935

The Liguorian



In This Issue

- A Catholic Cause - - - - - C. D. McEnniry C.Ss.R.
The House of Hypocrisy, Story - - D. F. Miller C.Ss.R.
Romance Among the Saints - - A. T. Zeller C.Ss.R.
Green Pastures - - - - - D. J. Corrigan C.Ss.R.
Gathered at Dawn - - - - - P. J. Etzig C.Ss.R.
Chinese Catholic Action - - - R. J. Miller C.Ss.R.
The Purification, Poem - - - - Bro. Reginald C.Ss.R.

Catholic Anecdotes - Book Reviews

Lucid Intervals - Catholic Events - Liguoriana

Pointed Paragraphs: - Interpreting Catholic Press Month - Encouraging Facts
Depths of Hatred - Over-Strenuous Lives - Signs of the Times

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AMONGST OURSELVES

Here is something for the willing campaigners during Catholic Press Month, February, to consider:

In a survey conducted by the Department of Catholic Press of the Chaminade High School Catholic Action Club of Dayton, Ohio, it was learned that 1200 families in that city spent approximately \$400 for secular publications during the past year, while the same families expended \$33 for Catholic publications. The same survey showed that 318 families of those reached spent from 25c to 50c a week for secular papers, but not a cent for Catholic papers.

* * *

Catholic Action is the watchword these days, and the little survey mentioned above demonstrates how broad are the fields in which it has work to accomplish. If we were in a statistical mood, we would reduce to figures the general proportion between readers and non-readers of the Catholic Press, thus showing its present supporters how large a territory each one has in which to exercise his zeal!

* * *

From which the editor's mind conjures up a dream in which he sees each present subscriber sending in the name of a new one with his own renewal, until the long arm of the Catholic Press is doubled in its reach. If the dream is vain, at least we may suggest that those who enjoy THE LIGUORIAN, or any other organ of the Catholic Press, will make occasion during the month of February to speak of it to someone to whom it is unknown.

We recommend to the prayers of our readers Mrs. Mary Kathrein, mother of the Rev. John Kathrein, present business manager of THE LIGUORIAN, who died December 26th.

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*According to the Spirit of St.
of Catholic Belief and Practice*

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No. 2

The Purification

Sweet mystery! the Virgin Queen
In vast humility is seen,
Who meekly with the Law complied,
And Purity was purified!

Bring forth fair garlands to adorn
The mystic beauty of the morn,
For this New Eve hath vanquished pride
Since Purity was purified.

And let the joyful strain of song,
Oh Sion, thrill Thy courts along;
Lift up Thy gates and throw them wide,
Lo! Purity is purified!

Oh Stainless one! Creation's Best!
Whom God hath more than doubly blest,
To meet the coming Passiontide
Thy gentle heart was purified.

At Simeon's words what terrors rise
To dim the beauty of Thine eyes:
Thy Son, Thy Joy, is crucified,—
And thus Thy soul was purified!

— Bro. Reginald, C.Ss.R.

Father Tim Casey

A CATHOLIC CAUSE

C. D. McENNIRY, C.Ss.R.

"Welcome, Father Casey," said Mike Monogue.

"Welcome, Your Reverence," said Uncle Dan.

"Welcome, Father Tim," said Martin Gillhooley.

Uncle Dan rammed a generous load into the bowl of his ancient pipe in anticipation of a protracted session, and the three old cronies settled themselves completely into their chairs for one of the good long talks with the pastor which they enjoyed so much.

"How fortunate," exclaimed the priest, "to find you all three together! I did not look for such luck. Now I need explain my mission only once, instead of three times — then I'll be on my way."

"Sure 'tis not leaving so soon you are. The day is young yet."

"And I cannot afford to lose a minute of it. I must try to see every man in the parish and get this movement for poor Mexico well under way before next Sunday."

A look of weariness and discomfort came over the faces of the three men. Uncle Dan let the match burn out without holding it to his pipe.

"Arrah, Father Tim," he pleaded, "let ye stop and rest your bones a bit. I wouldn't be worritin' myself grey over thim Greasers. You'll no sooner have this fight patched up than they'll be startin' another, begor."

"Every pastor in the diocese must line up his men for a state-wide protest," said the priest. "Those are the Bishop's orders. There is nothing for us to do but to obey."

"What? Organize another protest! Is there to be no end to them?" Mike Monogue exclaimed.

"Does he think we have nothing else to do at all?" Uncle Dan demanded — forgetting that he himself had retired from all active labors ever since coming to live in the home of his niece, Mrs. Monogue.

"Far be it from me to utter a word agin our Lord Bishop or any other man of God," said Martin Gillhooley, "but 'tis aisy seen he never had wife and childre waitin' for him to bring home the daily bite and sup. Otherwise he wouldn't be laying all these burdens on us, one after another. 'Tis no more nor a couple of weeks since he had us organizing agin bad books, and last spring it was to protest agin double taxation for our schools."

"And — and — this Legion of Decency," Uncle Dan added a bit sourly. Only last Thursday Father Casey had happened upon him coming out of one of the black-listed shows, and he knew he was in for a drubbing sooner or later.

"And we had to tell the Morning Press what we thought of that slap they gave the Pope and after that we had to slam our Congressman with letters because Catholics were not getting a square deal as regards radio broadcasts," Mike Monogue continued the litany. "We are with him, of course, in standing up for our rights, but he should take into consideration we have something else to do besides. And now on top of it all, comes Mexico. We must sacrifice our bit of badly needed rest and recreation to protest about Mexico."

The priest listened sympathetically to these overburdened crusaders, then he began ever so gently: "It is refreshing to hear you men speak out your minds frankly. Nobody would be better pleased with that than the Bishop himself. He is a fairminded man. He does not want all the burden to bear on a few willing shoulders. If you have worked too hard for the other causes, done more than your share, you know, I'm sure the Bishop would — why, I will even tell him so myself. He will not only exempt you from the present drive but give you honorable mention for your work in the past. Let me see —" he whipped out note book and pencil. "What did you do regarding bad books, lending libraries, news-stands?"

"None of us are great readers," Mike Monogue hastened to inform him. "That would hardly concern us."

Uncle Dan was shuffling his feet and trying to think up some excuse to get out of the house. What he had dreaded came before he could avoid it. "And the Legion of Decency," said the priest, "of course you had no part in the immense labor of reviewing the pictures, organizing the committees, conducting the studies —. But at least you did your bit by staying away from —"

"Father Tim," Uncle Dan interrupted, "I had no idea that was a black-list show till I met Your Reverence and you give me the frozen glance. Con Shane and myself found the time hanging heavy on our hands and thought we'd look at a pitcher. That one happened to be the handiest."

"Hm-m, not even giving thirty seconds to read the list that had been prepared with so much labor and care. You were hardly over-

working in *that* crusade. And you, Mike, when the Catholic stations were crowded off the air —"

"I wrote to our Congressman," Monogue informed him. "That — that letter of mine — Mary Rose, that letter of mine was mailed, wasn't it?"

"No, daddy, it has been lying on the desk ever since."

"Never mailed! What do you mean! Margaret, Margaret," he roared to his wife, "why didn't you see that important letter was sent?"

Mary Rose offered the explanation. "Remember, daddy, you were not sure of the name of the Congressman. So after I had written the letter — I mean after I had typed your letter (to keep the record straight: Mary Rose had not only typed it, she composed it), you told me to hold it — till you got the name — and it has been there ever since."

"We all did our part to bring the local paper to time when it took that slap at the Pope, however," Martin Gillhooley boasted.

"Did you canvass the advertisers, Martin?"

"No, we weren't in that, but we drew up and signed a powerful protest."

"You mean you three helped to draft it?"

"Well no, it was already drafted — expressed our own ideas perfectly. So we put our names to it when it was passed around at the Holy Name meeting. Didn't we, Mike?"

"Yes, yes. That is, — you mean the petition to the Legislature about double taxation, don't you?"

"Oh, that was it, was it?" Gillhooley returned weakly. "I didn't read it myself. Brady passed it to me and I signed it."

"After all, gentlemen," said the priest rising and putting away notebook and pencil. He observed that Mrs. Monogue and even Mary Rose were grinning at their discomfiture — "it may not be advisable to send the Bishop a detailed list of all you have so far done for the Catholic causes since the only item we can vouch for is that you once signed your names to some kind of petition without knowing what it was about. — I'll be on my way. By the bye, Martin, I hear you lost your Great Dane."

Overjoyed at the change of subject, Gillhooley launched upon a thrilling recital of the investigations he made, the miles he walked, the questions he asked. "But," he concluded, "I would have failed after all if it hadn't of been for Henry Weiser that lives in the yellow house on

the corner opposite from us. He got a hint or something when he was down at Buck Park. Henry didn't stop for anything until he ran down that clue and brought back my pup safe and sound. That's what I call a true friend for you."

Father Casey changed the subject again. "Suppose," he said, "suppose times got worse and worse until at last so many desperate men turn Red that the atheistic communists are able to overthrow the Government. Suppose they turn all the Catholic schools and many of the churches into joints and dance halls, take little Mother Cecilia and her assistant and lock them up in the police station with the drunks, lead the rest of the Sisters out to the city limits and tell them to beat it, round up your little Monica and all the other parish children and expose them publicly in ways too shameful to mention. Suppose, after shooting and exiling bishops and clergy, they leave just one old priest for all the Catholics in these two dioceses. Month after month you pass your desecrated churches without ever a chance for Mass or Confession; your dear ones take sick and plead in vain for a priest; they die and are buried with no more spiritual help than will be given to Gillhooley's pup. — Martin, if the man that helps you find your dog is a true friend, what do you say of the man that would help in straits like that? That is exactly the condition of the Mexicans. They are your fellow-Catholics. They are, like you, members of the mystical Body of Christ. They are being despoiled by a clique of God-hating tyrants of what they treasure most — the sacraments of their religion and the purity of their children. Are you not willing to sacrifice a few moments from your rest and recreation and amusements to join in the movement to help them?"

UNEQUAL SHARES

When St. Bernard and four of his brothers had determined to leave the world and devote themselves to the religious life, they paid a visit to Fontaines to ask their father's blessing. On bidding farewell to their home and family, one of them said to their young brother, Nivard:

"Good-bye, Nivard; you are now heir to all our father's possessions, and will enjoy the pleasures of wealth and honorable station."

"Ah, yes!" replied Nivard, "you take heaven and leave me earth; the shares are not equal, and I will not be satisfied with mine."

And, in fact, when he had grown to manhood, and his father had no longer need of his service, Nivard, too, entered the monastery.

Houses

THE HOUSE OF HYPOCRISY

D. F. MILLER, C.Ss.R.

You will probably sympathize with the man in this story. Unless, perhaps, you have experienced what he has.

Harry Kenton pulled his hat down over his dark eyes, threw his overcoat collar up around his ears, and walked out of the warmth and comfort of his home — into the night. It was a clear night, with the temperature hovering just below the freezing point, with a full moon and a few of the brighter stars modestly vying with the sharp lights of the city and passing automobiles. The man swung into a brisk walk through the streets, with the air of one setting out upon a long journey.

His walk was the result of a conversation he had just held with his wife. It had been too calm and matter-of-fact to be called a scene or a quarrel or even a discussion; it was simply a conversation in which she had told him that they had come to the parting of the ways; she was about to get a divorce.

"So far as I can see," she had said, without a trace of emotion, as she lolled indifferently in her chair, "ours is a simple case of incompatibility. Our temperaments are not attuned."

He had smiled faintly at the phrase; he knew his wife's weakness for dabbling in the current fads of New Thought that provided her with such expressions and he despised it roundly. Yet he had shown no bitterness. Assuming her own objective, detached attitude, he had said:

"One should be sure it is the only solution to the problem, before going into that, I think."

"Not necessarily," she had answered, reaching for a cigarette at her elbow. "If it is the easiest solution, that is enough."

As if not hearing the words, he had gone on, musingly: "To me the word 'divorce' has always smacked of defeat or failure. Even hypocrisy, which I loathe. 'Till death do us part' — unless a touch of ennui intervenes."

She had been unruffled by his words. "Everybody's doing it," she had yawned, "and after all, it saves an awful lot of boredom."

He had looked at her then, and suddenly realized how true her words were, how infinite a boredom he would escape by the simple expedient of divorce. He was too refined to admit to himself how deeply he had come to hate this pampered woman, whom he had loved and desired,

wooded and wed, only to find that her dominant selfishness, dammed up during their courtship, was bound to release itself in a steadily increasing volume.

It was she who had broached the subject of divorce. She approached it by telling him calmly of her fondness for Jack Ashley and his for her. It was like telling him of a new fur coat she had seen in a shop window and taken a fancy to . . .

He had finally risen from his chair, looked down at her dully, and said: "Perhaps you are right. . . . But let's give the matter a little more thought, anyway." She had smiled confidently at him — confidently of herself — as he left the house.

So now he walked the streets, pondering. . . . The word "hypocrisy" stuck in his mind. He had always hated the word and the thing it connoted. . . . He had been brought up in a typical American fashion — without any religion whatsoever, but under an old world moral code that made the natural virtues a passion with him. In an environment where show passed for substance, deceit for cleverness, cant for wisdom, success for virtue, self-exaltation for ability, he had clung to the old-fashioned virtues as closely as he could. "A straight-shooter" he had once overheard an associate referring to him. . . . He had not felt exalted; the intended praise meant no more to him that if he had been praised for being a man.

But this was what it brought one to. . . . He was enmeshed in the thing he hated. He refused to think of what he would gain by the divorce; when he pondered that, everything in his nature seemed to demand it. . . . It would mean another chance to have a home and children and love, the love that means having someone to talk to and be silent with, someone to share things with, burdens as well as blessings. . . . It would mean escape from the growing intolerableness of companionship with the childish, irresponsible woman who was his wife . . .

But he had pledged himself. . . . He was walking through the downtown streets now, unconsciously watching the faces of those who passed him by. . . . Tired, hungry, sensual, proud, selfish, complaining, eager faces . . . faces that looked forward with hope; faces that looked backward with despair. . . . He passed a theatre . . . it was a burlesque house . . . posters of almost nude women in various contortions thrust themselves upon the passers-by. . . . Blear-eyed idlers who had not the price

to enter feasted on the posters. . . . Well-dressed men with deep-voiced women hanging on their arms walked in without looking to the right or left. . . . Harry hardly paused, but the thought was in his mind: some of these people sit in churches on Sunday . . . they speak contemptuously, no doubt, of acquaintances who "go wrong"; they belong to uplift societies . . . hypocrites! . . . So are we all.

At a corner a heavy-set fellow with dirty, tattered clothing and a vile cheap-whiskey breath, seized his arm, "How about it, brother?" he whined. "I haven't had a bite to eat since yesterday." Harry felt like flinging him off into the gutter, then caught himself. "A hypocrite? So are we all," and threw a quarter into the man's hand.

He walked on, out of the downtown area with its crowded streets, mingled aromas, rushing traffic and brilliant lights, out into the calm quiet of a residential district. His savage attitude towards himself and the world of which he was a part, began to be tempered as the sound of his own footsteps broke in on the peace of the empty streets. . . . Here were the homes of people; whatever of hypocrisy was here, was hidden at least. . . . The glow of lamps through the windows, the sight of a man or a woman reading a paper in comfort, these things soothed him but made him sad . . .

After all, he began to think, what did it matter what one did or was, so long as something of peace or pleasure was gained? He had made of truthfulness, fidelity, justice, honesty, an idol, but the idol had given him nothing in return. Had it anything to give? Were not these people right who took what they could get out of life, perhaps built homes like these out of the false promises they had made, the doubtful deals they had consummated, the innumerable hypocrisies they had practiced? What had he been looking for, anyway? What had he asked of life? Was it only what other people possessed, though they had acquired it by other means? Then he had been wrong and they had been right; he had been a fool; he had to learn from this world that was all around him, that seemed to know better than he, the whither and how of life . . .

He walked on until he began to feel a sudden fatigue. He was perspiring freely even in the cold. . . . He realized with a start that he had walked miles. He got on a bus and rode back through the city towards his home.

II.

Harry Kenton threw down the papers he had held in his hands, leaned back in his swivel-chair, and looked levelly into the face of the stenographer, Mary Agnew, who had been taking his dictation. They had been working over-time, and were alone in the office.

"That will be all," he said, and then added, "of *that*. But let's talk for a while."

Of late he had found himself possessed by an irresistible impulse to get people into conversation. He had been trying to live down his own principles, to adopt the code and customs of his wife and so much of the world around him. . . . He had even made clumsy attempts to have an affair with one or the other girl who had attracted his attention—but without much success. His failure was due not to any unwillingness on the part of those singled out, but to something within him that still rebelled and remonstrated against the thinly veiled hypocrisy that entered into all such dealings. And, moreover, the conversation of those with whom he had gone out had added immeasurably to his discomfort.

There was the naive type, too stupid to make an intelligent remark, too clever not to use the occasion to try to gain access to his generosity. He felt he would always remember snatches of the twaddle he had listened to, in night-clubs and tea-rooms and theatres. . . . "I just love these exciting places. . . . All the people and music and drinks and everything. . . . A girl works all day, and it's such a relief to relax and enjoy life like this, with a gentleman. . . . Yes, I'll take another Martini . . . Oh, just look at that ermine wrap over there! See it? Behind that pillar . . . isn't that just gorgeous . . . it must be heaven, to have things like that . . . mink would be good enough for me . . ." Little could she have guessed Harry's thoughts. . . . "Poor little fool! Just a hypocrite, like all of us, and hardly knowing it!"

The others had been no better. There was one who had tried to play on his sympathies by the tale of her own unsuccessful marriage and divorce, with an acted emotion and nagging repetition that had made him sympathize more with the man who had left her. . . . Another who had tried to sweep him off his feet by showing her knowledge of places to go, suggesting half a dozen gay resorts an evening. . . . All had their little thinly veiled plans and schemes. . . . All had known that he was a married man, not even divorced . . . it had made no difference.

But somehow this stenographer who sat across from him seemed

different. He had seldom before looked on her as a human being, just a cog in the machinery of his business. . . . She was not good-looking in the accepted sense . . . she was not very young, somewhere in the middle thirties, he would judge. . . . But there was something restful and open and cheerful and confident about her expression that contrasted with so much that he saw around him and with so many of his recent experiences that he was drawn unaccountably to her.

"Suppose," he said abruptly, as she sat straightening out her notes after his rather strange remark, "we go out and have dinner together, and perhaps a show and so on?"

She looked up at him sharply, and there was no hesitation nor uncertainty about her reply, though it came in the form of a question.

"Are you forgetting that you are a married man?"

He winced a little at that. Then suddenly he felt comforted and relieved. . . . Something like this he had expected her to say, even wanted her to say. . . . At least this set her apart from the two-faced hypocritical world he knew. But could she carry it through? And if so, on what ground? Perhaps he could learn.

"But," he returned, "my wife has given me notice; she is going to divorce me."

"Oh," said the stenographer. "I'm sorry. But you will still be married, you know." It was like that to her — just a fact, no explanation necessary.

"Then you don't believe in divorce? Not even when one's married life turns out to be intolerable, empty, impossible? When it has left a man with nothing of what he had looked for, nothing of what everybody looks for in some small degree?"

His face showed drawn and pale as he stated his case, and the woman across from him was grave as she replied.

"It is a form of suffering, surely; perhaps the bitterest form. But if one has something to suffer for —" she paused a moment, while her eyes brightened, — "why, for such a one, life never becomes futile in any case."

Harry leaned forward now. Here was someone who knew something, some secret that had been denied him. Some reason for truth and honesty and fidelity and justice, yes, and suffering too. He pinned her with his eyes and noticed how little she wavered, as he asked quietly:

"What is that something of which you speak? Or is there any such thing?"

"Yes," she answered. "Only one thing . . . God."

Harry relaxed in his chair and something near scorn but more like weariness and disappointment was in his words. "Oh, religion. That's what you mean."

"Yes," she answered firmly, as she rose and prepared to depart. She spoke rapidly, like one wanting to say what she had to say and then run. "I mean religion. Living for God. He made you . . . died for you . . . will greet you when you die. . . . Nothing else matters — very much, except how you stand with Him . . . what you do for Him." She was ready to go now. "If you want to know more, visit a Catholic Church . . . or see a priest. . . . Good night."

She was gone. The man still sat at his desk, thinking he saw before him the warm, radiant, clear and clean features of his stenographer as she had thrown at him her own deepest convictions about life — about God. He groped for contact with her philosophy . . . reached out into the darkness and the mists that had surrounded his experiences . . . searched himself, his world, his friends. . . . God! God! *Is there a God?*

III.

"What dost thou ask of the Church of God?"

The priest stood calmly before him, saying the words, Latin and English, by heart, though he held the book open in his hand. . . . Worlds seemed to be twisting, turning, revolving before Harry Kenton's eyes. . . . He heard the confused noises of the streets drifting into the sacristy where he stood with bent head. . . . Rumble of streetcars, shouting of newsboys, screaming of automobile brakes. . . . Memory played tricks on him and he heard snatches of conversations. . . . "Everybody's doing it. . . . After all it saves an awful lot of boredom." . . . "A girl works all day and it's such a relief to relax and enjoy life like this. . . . Yes, I'll take another Martini." . . . "Take a letter, Miss Agnew. . . . We are sorry that due to the continuance of depressed market prices, we cannot. . . ." . . . "Oh, you mean religion. . . . Yes, I mean religion . . . " "How about it, brother? I haven't had a bite to eat since yesterday morning." . . .

That was the world he had known. . . . A melee of struggling mortals, many of them material-minded, earth-bound, restless, hypocritical, childish. . . . They flitted past him with faces painted, with haunted tired eyes, with gesturing hands and excited voices, seeking something and fleeing something, they knew not what. . . . And here he knelt, a man apart, in the quiet of a sacristy, with ancient, dust-covered pic-

tures looking down at him and the peculiar smell of old incense smoke around him, and a priest standing before him. He looked up and answered the priest's words:

"Faith."

"Dost thou believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth?"

Believe? Advertisements, sales-talks, success formulas swam fleetingly, confusedly through his consciousness. . . . "A million people believe they have solved their last problem by buying our product . . ." . . . "Say good-bye to worry when you drink, eat, use, wear, this, that or the other." . . . "Self-confidence is the secret of a successful business career and happy domestic life . . . Believe in yourself!" . . . Here were creeds—the creeds of paunchy business men with fat cigars clenched in their mouths and a sly wink for a crooked deal . . . the creeds of gay women with dreamy eyes and liquid voices and insinuating ways . . . the creeds of thousands of benighted plodders who built their lives out of newspapers, sophisticated magazines, advertisements and the claptrap of those who spoke with the loudest voices. . . . He answered the priest with scarcely a pause:

"I do believe."

"Dost thou believe in Jesus Christ, His Only Son, Our Lord, Who was born and suffered for us? . . . Dost thou believe in the Holy Ghost, the Holy Catholic Church, the Communion of Saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body and life everlasting?"

The world of his experience had faded now. Suddenly all his own innermost thoughts, feelings, aspirations, swung into balanced order. . . . Justice, truth, fidelity, honesty—they found a mark now, a purpose, a sanction sufficient though they march on alone through life. . . . Here were the things worth-while, high above the roar of the crowd, lifting up his eyes and heart and all the energies of his soul. Up towards a cross and a Savior with Whose Body he himself was destined to be united. . . . He seemed to be opening a door and walking into a world where there was peace . . . rest, as he said firmly:

"I do believe!"

"Wilt thou be baptized?"

Hardly as one answering a ceremonial question, rather as one overcoming the last obstacle to a cherished goal, he said: "I will." The water was poured over his head, the words spoken . . . and for a long time he knelt, absorbed in prayer. . . .

He thought back leisurely over all that had happened during the past few weeks as he walked through the streets towards his home. . . . His first reaction of near scorn for the suggestion made to him by his stenographer. . . . All the current popular notions, all the stereotyped ideas and phrases of his environment about religion had added to his scorn. All the fads and fanaticisms of extremists called "religion" formed his first picture. . . . Holy Jumpers leaping up and down and shouting incongruous, meaningless words. . . . Sanctimonious-visaged prophets of woe, raving and ranting against things that even his untrained sense of fitness knew were innocent, and letting crimes that cleaved the heart of mankind pass without a word. . . . Hypocrites, too, whose names were associated with fashionable church rosters, who attended piously, but whom he knew to be as conscienceless in private life as more forthright pagans. . . .

But that was all passed now. He had played with the idea implanted in his mind by his stenographer for days, before he had the courage to approach a priest. . . . From that moment it had been like a smoothing out of the jumbled parts of some great puzzle; like unfolding a blueprint that showed the whole plan and order of things; like coming into touch with something greater, grander than all he had ever dreamed. . . .

From the beginning it had been clear to him, in fact it was the force that urged him on, that he would not find escape from suffering but the end that would make it fit into the scheme of life. Always before him had been the vision of his ruined hopes of home . . . his wife, a whim-driven creature of ease and pleasure; his future, empty, lonely, barren. . . .

He had tried to steel himself to the picture, and from the first prayer he had uttered, he had found courage developing, growing. . . . She could get her divorce, if she wished. . . . "You will still be married, you know."

He entered the house around which his hopes had been built. Its loneliness pressed in on him. Its silence unnerved him. He wanted to talk or shout or to sing — to push back the encroaching silence. . . . Then his wife appeared on the stairs, dressed for the street.

"I'm going out," she said. "I have an engagement with Jack."

Harry Kenton looked at her a moment. Anger melted into contempt . . . contempt into pity. . . . But it was fidelity that spoke now:

"I'll be here when you come back," he said quietly.

Romance Among the Saints

THE HUMAN LOVE OF ST. ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

(Continued)

AUG. T. ZELLER, C.Ss.R.

After as before her marriage Elizabeth seemed to have but one link with the world — and that was her love for Louis, then her betrothed, now her husband. But like a link in the rosary — it was part of the Rosary itself and glorified by that fact.

It is somewhat difficult to form a picture of the saint — only stray traits are retained for us in the early descriptions of her life. She was a decidedly brunette type — clear complexion — hair black — eyes that sparkled with tenderness and kindness — figure regular and graceful — bearing grave and unaffected, even majestic. She was evidently one who could win and hold the affection of her husband.

Her personality was still more admirable and lovable, and if there had been little in her exterior to appeal to a Prince, her character must still have won a king's heart. It is the simple peaceful orderliness of her character that strikes one: God was the center of her thought and life — and everything seemed to fall into place — and everything being in its rightful place — she would wait, eyeing it according to its value. This resulted in that array of virtuous qualities that adorned her more than royal robe or crown.

Love is the whole of perfection — Love of God, wherever He be found. In Elizabeth's eyes Louis, her husband, was still her brother too, given her by the arrangement of her father whose will was God's will; he was her betrothed by her vocation which she recognized as God's will; he was her brother in Christ and as "one of the least of his brethren," whatever was done to him, was done to Christ; he was her husband by the act of God ratifying their marriage vows and endowing them with all the sanctity of grace — grace which is but the outpouring of divine Love into our hearts.

Here then is the solution of the seeming paradox in her middle life — as we may call it: the union of supreme love of God and supreme love of her husband. Since the one was viewed as part of the other — not at all contrary — both could flower as naturally and as gaily as the rose in its garden-bed.

The singleness of her love for her husband is charmingly evidenced by the many little artifices that she resorted to when he was forced to be absent from her side. These two seemed to be indispensable to each other. Thus Montalembert tells us in the life of St. Elizabeth:

"When the Duke's hunting excursions were not too distant, he always took his dear Elizabeth with him — and she was happy to accompany him, even though she had to travel over rugged roads and dangerous paths, and to brave storms; but neither hail, nor snow, nor floods, nor excessive heats, could hinder her from going, so anxious was she to be near him who never kept her from God; nevertheless, it sometimes happened that Louis was obliged by his duties as a sovereign to undertake long journeys, even out of his own dominions, where he could not take his wife; then as soon as he would set out, she would lay aside her royal robes, and covering her head with a veil, would put on the costume of a widow. Thus she would remain during his absence, awaiting his return in prayers, vigils, and severe mortifications.

"But as soon as the approach of Louis was announced, she used to hastily adorn herself with all the care and magnificence he could require.

"'It is not', she would say to her maidens, 'through carnal pleasure or vanity that I deck myself — God is my witness — but only through Christian charity, that I may remove from my brother all occasion of discontent or sin, if anything in me should displease him, that he may love but me in the Lord, and that God who has consecrated our lives upon the earth may unite us in heaven.'"

The human tenderness of her love for Louis was manifested in a hundred ways, and even in the midst of the most tender displays it was always close to God. We are told, for example, in her life, "that every night the young wife, profiting by the rest or apparent sleep of her husband, would get out of bed, and kneeling by its side would pray earnestly thinking of the holy crib at Bethlehem, and thanking the Lord that he had deigned to be born at midnight for her salvation and that of the human race." When Louis awoke, fearing that such penance was too severe for his delicate wife, he would beg her to stop.

"Cease, dear sister, and take thy rest," he would say; then taking her hand he would hold it until she was again by his side or until he fell asleep leaving his hand in hers. Elizabeth "would then bathe in tears of pious fervor that beloved hand that seemed to ally her to earth." And we might say — that also allied her to heaven.

These prayers and penances she also meant to win control of herself — control that is always necessary and the price of true and lasting love. Thus on one such occasion she said to her maids who found her on her knees in the morning and told her she had better sleep in bed:

"No, I cannot always pray. I can at least mortify myself by remaining away from my beloved husband. I wish that my flesh should be conquered — it can but gain by doing what the soul wishes."

VERY HUMAN WITHAL

A very human incident is told of her by Montalembert (*Life*, p. 165). "On one occasion when they were assisting at solemn Mass, forgetting the sanctity of the Sacrifice, Elizabeth fixed her eyes and thoughts on her beloved husband who was near her, and allowed herself to consider unreservedly and with admiration the beauty and amiability which rendered him so dear to all.

"But coming to herself at the moment of the consecration, the Divine Spouse of her soul manifested to her how these human considerations had offended Him; for when the priest elevated the Sacred Host for the peoples' adoration, she thought she saw in his hands our Savior crucified, with His wounds bleeding."

She was alarmed at this vision, says the author. No doubt she knew the fault was not grave — and no doubt she understood that our Lord did not mean to say that this fault was the cause of His wounds — for it was a venial sin not a mortal sin. But, the saints took venial sin as seriously as it deserves, and so we are not surprised that, "magnifying her fault she fell on her face to the earth, bathed in tears before the altar, and asked pardon of God."

JOYS OF MOTHERHOOD

"A home without children is an incomplete home. It is incomplete in the sense of not fulfilling its objective biological and social purposes. It is likewise incomplete in the sense of failing to give the twain who make the home the supreme happiness and sacred privilege of parenthood. It is incomplete for it is lonely. The play of parental affections and impulses brings in a new source of joy and blessedness within the home. Moreover the already existing mutual love of husband and wife is enriched and deepened and further consecrated in this shared love of offspring, and is felt and entertained and further satisfied by their common sacrifice and unselfish service for their children." (*Cooper IV*, p. 148.)

Besides the many graces that God gave Elizabeth and Louis, He also granted them the one that was sweetest and dearest to their hearts. In 1223, Elizabeth then sixteen years old, became a mother. Her thoughts all this time were upon our Blessed Lady, and it was on one of her greatest feast-days, the Annunciation, that her first child was born — a son. In 1224 she bore a daughter who was called Sophia and later married the Duke of Brabant. She had also two other daughters, both of whom afterwards took the veil as Spouse of Christ.

Her spirit is beautifully illustrated by her conduct on these occasions. After each of her confinements, as soon as she was sufficiently recovered, instead of making the event an occasion of feasting and worldly rejoicing, as was the custom of the time, she thought only of consecrating the new-born babe to God. Bearing the infant in her arms, she went out secretly from the castle, clad in a plain woolen robe, and barefooted, she walked to the distant church — that of St. Catherine, outside the city walls.

The descent was long and toilsome — the path covered with stones that bruised and cut her feet. On the way she carried her infant as the spotless Virgin had done. When she reached the church, she laid it on the altar, with a taper and a lamb, and kneeling before the tabernacle, she prayed:

"Lord Jesus Christ, to You and to your dear Mother Mary, I offer this cherished fruit of my womb. Behold, my God and my Lord, I give it with all my heart, even as You have given it to me; to You who are the sovereign and most loving Father of the mother and the child. The only prayer I make to you today, and the only grace I dare to request, is that it may please you to receive this little child, bathed in my tears, into the number of Your servants and Your friends, and to give it Your holy benediction."

SOLVING DIFFICULTIES

Such true love ever found a way to solve every difference,— for differences there must be between humans. Those that arose from the presence of the mother-in-law, who still could not stomach the piety of Elizabeth, were easily surmounted because God sometimes took a hand with miracles,— as when the loaves she was carrying to the poor were changed into roses, and the leprous beggar was changed into the figure of Our Lord. But there were others that might easily have caused difficulty; yet true love found a solution, sometimes a rather surprising one.

Thus when Elizabeth had grown in detachment to such an extent that her costly raiment seemed to irk her and she began to give it to the poor, situations arose that might easily have led to a rift. Once her father King Andrew sent an embassy to the Court of Thuringia to bring him an exact account of his daughter. Louis realized this and was uneasy.

"Dear Sister," he said to her, "here have people just arrived from thy father's court. I am sure they have come to learn what manner of life thou leadest with me and to see if thou hast really the retinue of a Duchess. But how canst thou appear before them? Thou art so continually occupied with thy poor ones, that thou forgettest thyself; and thou never wishest to wear other clothes than those miserable enough to put us both to shame. What dishonor to me when these men will go and tell in Hungary that I let thee want for raiment, and that they found thee in so pitiable a state! And now I have no time left to order others more suitable to thy rank and mine."

With the simplicity so characteristic of her, who seemed to know no problems, for Providence solved them all, — she gently replied:

"My dear lord and brother, let not this disquiet thee; for I have earnestly resolved never to place my glory in my apparel. I can well excuse myself to these lords, and I will endeavor to treat them with such gaiety and affability, that I will please them as much as if I wore the richest vesture."

She knelt a moment asking God to make her agreeable to her friends, rose quickly, dressed as best she could, and then joined the lordly company. She so enchanted all by her cordiality, by the sweetness and gentleness of her manners, by her beauty, that seemed to shine with unusual freshness, that they all forgot her dress. So much so that the ambassador afterwards reported that "the Queen of France could not be more gorgeously attired than was Elizabeth." Louis was astonished. But Elizabeth simply said:

"Behold what the Lord can do when He pleases."

A more serious difference still arose, — because it involved the Duchess' conscience. Her confessor, the Franciscan Conrad of Marburg, was convinced that certain taxes that had been levied on the people to defray the expenses of the royal table were unjust. He therefore forbade his penitent to partake of any food not furnished from her husband's private resources. Elizabeth, who keenly felt any injustice to

the poor, felt bound to obey. She told her husband of her resolve. It was certainly no easy situation. But her candor and simplicity, her absolute fidelity and complete love, made him respect her conscience, and he allowed her to carry out her design, saying:

"I would very willingly do the same, if it were not that I fear slander and scandal; but with God's help I will soon change this kind of life."

TOWARD A GREATER LOVE

A Catholic philosopher, Professor von Hildebrand, writing of marriage says: "The mission of the higher goods of this world to bring us nearer and yet nearer to God, is seen most clearly in the case of the highest good — namely marriage. The complete community of love and life peculiar to marriage possesses, when understood and experienced in the right way, a specific power to shatter pride. Profound love for the partner with whom life is henceforth to be spent in common, frees the soul from attachment to superficial goods such as property, power, external honor, worldly success . . .

"This forsaking of self (in marriage), this deep and noble happiness in wedlock which draws the glance upward to God in heartfelt gratitude, frees a man alike from proud self-assurance and from petty attachment to comfort, to the pleasures of the table, and frivolous amusement. The man who has been vouchsafed the supreme earthly happiness of a perfect marriage and who, with unremitting appreciation values the gift at its full worth, must become increasingly emancipated from those earthly goods of inferior value."

And Dr. Cooper of the Catholic University writes: "Marriage itself and homemaking are of their very nature sacred and unselfish; they fulfill unselfish tasks, and train mates in the practice of unselfishness. Through marriage love of self is as it were changed by a divine alchemy into love of neighbor, and egoistic forces are turned into altruistic channels."

Detachment and charity Elizabeth had learnt during the years before her marriage; but there is a noticeable growth in them after. An old writer says of her: "She who was in sovereign glory, sought the state of purity, that the world might have no part in her, and that she might be poor as Jesus Christ has been."

But an incident told by Montalembert, as charmingly simple and trifling as it seems, reveals this development most clearly. One night as they lay in bed, but sleepless, Elizabeth said to Louis:

"Sire, if it will not tire you, I will tell you of a thought I had of the kind of life we should lead in order to serve God better."

"Say it then, sweet friend," replied Louis, "what is your thought?"

"I wish then," said she, "that we had but one farm which would afford us enough to live on and about two hundred sheep; then you could cultivate the ground, lead the horses, and endure these labors for God's sake; and I would take care of the sheep and shear them." The Duke smiled at her simplicity and replied:

"Well, dear sister, if we had so much land and so many sheep, I think we would be no longer poor, and many people would find us still too rich."

At other times, when with her maidens, she would take off her royal robes and put on a poor mantle of grey color such as was worn by the very poor, and cover her head with a torn veil. Then feigning to beg bread, she would say:

"Thus will I walk when I shall be poor and in misery for the love of God." Did she know that she was speaking prophetically? The day actually came when she had to do this, after her husband's death. When that day came she was able to set out singing a *Te Deum*.

Astonishing however above all is her growth in charity. Her family of four children could not content her. All the poor and unfortunate apparently became her own children,—such was the thought she gave them, such the care she lavished on them. Charity to her meant personal service, not given in a condescending way as Duchess to her subjects, but as equal to equal in Christ.

We have seen how she carried to them whatever the larders and the granaries of the ducal household held; we have seen how she gave away her costly robes and dresses to provide for their wants; she fed the sick, made their beds, bathed them, washed their wounds and sores,—and when there was no towel at hand used her own veil. One day she went into the hut of a poor woman. She found her alone and too sick to help herself. The woman begged plaintively for milk. Immediately the Duchess went out into the stable and set about milking the cow to provide for the sick woman.

She hesitated at nothing; to serve her neighbor was to serve her Divine Lord.

Breaking Into Green Pastures

D. J. CORRIGAN, C.Ss.R.

Time: Christmas week, 1934.

Place: St. Mary's Infirmary, Catholic hospital for the Colored, conducted by the Sisters of St. Mary, St. Louis, Missouri.

Action: Supplied almost entirely by the colored patients of the hospital, most of them non-Catholics, who come into contact with Sisters, chaplain and Catholic practices for the first time.

These incidents and anecdotes, portraying better than scientific treatises the character of the negro, are actual happenings in the experience of the priest who relates them.

* * *

Christmas Eve On the Maternity

Floor: There is not much rest for the good Sisters on this holy eve, not much time for a prayerful preparation for midnight Mass and coming joys. But what matters it? Outside, a topsy-turvy world is laying in its store for the revels of tomorrow, — not much room out there for religion or Christ or children. But there is plenty of room here, in the hospital crib, in the hearts of dusky parents and happy Sisters. They are doing God's work.

For a moment the busy hall is hushed. But from the delivery room cries of pain go hurtling through every ward and floor, — just another daughter of Eve paying the penalty of mankind's curse. Eventually the mother's moans give way to another healthy, joyous cry, and still another, — blessed cry of babes. Soon after, a Sister demurely approaches a tall dark fellow, who is standing in the shadows. He is already the father of a large family. And then is heard:

"Sistah, they's a lot of things I could have used bettah on Christmas Day than twins; but since the good Lawd sent them to me, I'll try to do ma best for them."

* * *

Children's Ward: Most of the patients, non-Catholics, are destined to struggle on through a murky, contradictory world without the light of faith. They are willing, simple, childlike, — literally hungering for the bread of life; but there are few to teach them and, worse still, fewer places for them to worship.

One little tot, with her coal-black hair parted in all four directions and knotted into miniature braids, digs into my habit and pulls out a crucifix.

"Wha's dat?" she asks.

"That's our Lord," I reply.

"Our Lord! Who's He?"

"Our Lord is Jesus. Didn't you ever hear of Jesus? He was God and He came down from heaven and He died for us just so we could get to heaven."

The child's big black eyes betray only bewilderment and doubt.

I continue: "Don't you want to go to heaven after you die?"

"Heaven!" she answers, with big round eyes, "I'se afraid of heaven."

* * *

Downstairs, at the Entrance Way: "Father, you got any old col-lars, some that are about all worn out?"

I look down and there clad in overalls stands one of the neighborhood boys, a twelve year old lad, converted since the Sisters have undertaken their work. I notice that around his neck he is wearing a folded handkerchief with the knot tied in back. "I'll see," I reply.

Then: "Father, is they any way a colored boy could work his way through school and learn to be a Priest?"

* * *

Bright Spot: A doctor brings in a tiny premature baby, an energetic little fellow, who can bawl with the best of them. He is placed in the nursery and for half a day it seems that he will catch up with his noisy companions. Suddenly, however, the little one begins to fade. A nearby Sister takes water and a few moments later another cherub takes wing to heaven, there eternally to intercede for an outraged yet God-loved race.

* * *

Christmas Eve in a Nearby Church: A colored doctor and his young wife stand near a baptismal font. They are cultured, proficient, enthusiastic, — natural leaders of their people. As the saving waters obliterate all original taint, they both break down and cry.

Later the doctor explains: "Sister, every time I came into this hospital I felt something so good and holy I just had to become a Catholic."

* * *

Women's Floor: If a chaplain's sole duty in a hospital were to administer the sacraments, he would be stalemated here within a day.

Communicants are pitifully few. But the grace of God is bearing fruit in these simple hearts.

Eva, a good old spinster, has come to love the Sisters and desires with all her heart to adopt their religion. Though not very adept in the art of reading, she can be seen at almost any time of the day with catechism in hand. Finally she thinks she has mastered the Apostles' Creed. All goes well until she comes to the part:

"And in Jesus Christ, His only Son our Lawd, who was conceived of the Holy Ghost, bawn of the *Virginia Mary* — —"

"Father, can I be baptised soon? I'll be so happy when I get there! 'Coss, I'll never get as high as you are."

For days Eva has been longing to get down to the chapel for a Catholic service. Benediction of the Most Blessed Sacrament has just ended, and then we hear: "Father, I so wanted to get down to that meetin', but I had to stay in bed. The hymns of that *dictionary* sho sounded good."

A day or so later she is told to make ready for an operation. "Father, I wants you to be near when I goes into that operatin' room."

The operation is not a success and Eva begins to sink. But she is happy now, for she is "one of us." Newly baptised and anointed, she smiles and trusts her way right into a happy eternity.

Aftermath: A lady in an adjoining bed asks for instructions. Upon being asked why, she answers, "When I saw how happy Eva was in learning about the Catholic Faith, I decided to become one too."

* * *

Everywhere: As the chaplain makes his daily rounds, he grows to love these unpretentious folk. What splendid Catholics they would make, if they had only half a chance!

"Well, how is everybody in here this morning?"

"I feel fine, Father."

Or: "I don't feel so good. How you feel, Father?"

"Fine."

"Tha's good."

Or: "Father, I been waitin' for you to come up all day."

Or: "Father, will you pray with me?"

Or: "Father, I am going to have an operation Monday. Will you come and see me befo'?"

Or: "Father, I nevah met anybody befo' like these Sistahs. I'll re-

member them till my dyin' day. When I gets out of here, I'm goin' try to do something for them."

* * *

Men's Floor: One powerful fellow, not old in years but broken in body, has been confined to his cot for several weeks. Heeding the call of grace, he has determined to become a Catholic. As he is afflicted with a serious heart condition and almost total blindness, and his nose and ears bear many a scar, I am not surprised when he tells me:

"Father, I been prizefightin' most of my life. Been all over the country. Fought Jack Dempsey and Johnson and all of them."

Since the poor fellow is in imminent danger of slipping into prolonged unconsciousness, his instruction must be confined to the bare essentials. But he is intelligent and grasps the fundamentals well. Immediately after his baptism, like a child that has never learned to master its feelings, he begins to sob long and vociferously. Feeling that the emotional display is bad for his malady, the Sister attempts to quiet him; but he turns to her and declares, "Ma'am, I'se so happy I just can't help it."

Later: "Mr. — — —, how did you get into the fighting game?"

"Well, I was born down in Mississippi. They was a boy in our town that boasted he could beat everybody in town. They used to fight behind a livery stable and the whites would stand around and watch. One day I stepped up and licked him, and from that time I was champion of de town."

* * *

Consolations Amid Gloom: Perhaps in no Catholic hospital of its size in the United States are so few Holy Communions received. But it is not the patients' fault; they simply do not know; they have never heard of this incorruptible Food.

One old fellow, a convert of several months, confined with a malignancy, upon being asked whether he wishes to receive in the morning, smiles with all his teeth and replies, "I never wants to miss."

A very ancient gentleman, native of south Africa, with cotton white hair capping a rough countenance that seems to have withstood all the storms of a century, makes his confession and prepares for his Christmas Communion. After he has welcomed his God to his heart, the tears stream down his furrowed cheeks. "It was like a picture of St. Peter," exclaims one of the Sisters.

* * *

One good old lady, picture of the ideal mammy of old, lies patiently bearing torture to the extreme. "Father, she is suffering almost more than any patient I have ever had," volunteers a Sister.

The same Sister keeps a faithful watch over the sufferer. During one of her many daily visits to the room, she inquires:

"Honey, are you feeling any better now?"

"No, Sister, no better."

"Well, in all your pain now, look up to the crucifix on the wall and ask our dear Lord to help you in your suffering."

"Sistah, I do that all day. I look up there and see Him suffering so much for me! And I'm offerin' all my sufferings for the dear Lawd."

Beautiful act of love! Yet this lady is not a Catholic.

* * *

Another lady is dying of cancer. Mother of eleven sons and daughters, she is fervent in her Baptist belief. It would be criminal to attempt to destroy her good faith. So all we can do is try to dispose her for a happy death. I cannot but be convinced that the trusting sincerity of these people makes mighty inroads on the mercy of God.

"Do you want me to pray with you now?" I ask.

She cannot speak, but earnestly nods her head in affirmation.

We begin, and her eyes tell me that she means every word. "My Jesus, I want to do all that is necessary to be saved and be happy with you forever. My Jesus, I believe in You, I trust You, I love You. My Jesus, I am heartily sorry for all the sins of my past life, because by them I have offended You whom I should love."

She dies a beautiful and holy death.

* * *

At the Nurses' Home: St. Mary's has a school of nursing. No modern million dollar structure graces the premises, just the old original convent converted into a cozy but close fitting home. But the girls are there, good girls, from Illinois and Missouri and Mississippi and Louisiana, twenty-five all told. Next September the third and final class is to be added.

With a natural kindness and devotedness that once made their female forebears the beloved mammies of thousands of southern homes, these girls have a special adaptability for nursing. They are earnest, straight-forward, simple girls, with a joyous sense of humor and no

meagre ability to learn. Almost all Catholics, they constitute one of the hopes of this struggling hospital in its truly apostolic work.

"Father, your blessing, please."

As I raise my hands over the twenty-five reverent heads, I never pray more fervently that God may keep close to Himself these girls who with all the noble aspirations of Catholic maidenhood have so many temptations to face and so many social and religious hardships to overcome.

At midnight Mass two of these girls, in customary veil and gown of white, make their way to the sanctuary before the others and receive their first Holy Communion.

* * *

Back to the Nursery: If fruitfulness is one of heaven's blessings, then the colored are of the elect. This place is filled to overflowing with Christmas babies. There they lie, — some sleeping peacefully, others crying vigorously; some on their backs, others on their sides; some sucking bottles, others trying to eat their thumbs; each covered with its tiny checkered blanket. They are sweet little things, endowed with all the charm and innocence of babyhood. Surely God must love them and want them! But sad — there is to be only one Catholic among them!

Yes, it is sad to think that such little feet and hands will one day have to tread and combat a world that is unsympathetic and often cruel; sad, that such little hearts, which will never quite lose their instinctive longing for God, will have to grope their way through a land of coldness and probably never be warmed and heartened by the torch of faith. As one colored doctor declares, the negro race, with all its willingness to find the true way to Christ, is at present an easy, actual prey in the hands of superstitious charlatans and quacks. Only one agency in the world today can save these poor people, — morally, socially, and even physically, — and that is the Catholic Church.

But what are we doing for them? They are wandering, stumbling, falling about in the darkness, so desirous to learn and obey. Are we lighting up their *via dolorosa*? Possibly, — with a few flickering candles.

Here in this historic Catholic city, with its more than a hundred splendid churches and its large negro population, for all practical purposes there is *only one colored parish*, and that the poorest of the poor!

Statutes of Chinese Catholic Action

R. J. MILLER, C.Ss.R.

The following articles are translated from the Latin original in the January, 1933, number of "*Collectanea Commissionis Synodalis*," the Official Organ of the Synodal Commission of China, and were kindly supplied to the LIGUORIAN by His Excellency Most Reverend J. A. Walsh, Superior General of the Maryknoll Fathers. They will be of considerable interest, we are sure, to all who are eager to become acquainted with the Pope's program of Catholic Action and its application in various countries.

Three documents were published in the "*Collectanea Commissionis Synodalis*": I. a letter from the Sacred Congregation of Propaganda approving the Statutes; II. a letter of the Apostolic Delegate communicating the approval and giving some practical instructions on the application of the Statutes; III. the Statutes.

I. LETTER OF PROPAGANDA

Rome, December 6, 1932.

Your Excellency:

The Statutes of Chinese Catholic Action, drawn up by your Excellency after a four years' trial, and now supported by the more complete approval of the Ordinaries, have been found to be in complete accord with the Pontifical instructions, given repeatedly and with the greatest clearness by the reigning Pontiff, who has Catholic Action most closely at heart.

These Statutes, which are the fruit of a definite and successful experiment earnestly undertaken after the message of the Holy Father dated August 1, 1928, bring to mind the solemn words of that memorable document: "The Holy Father recommends to the Most Reverend Ordinaries, as a compliment to the work of evangelization, that they introduce and promote Catholic Action, by which the faithful of both sexes, and especially his beloved youth, will work in union and harmony, by prayer, word, and deed, for the peace, social well-being, and prosperity of their country, taking special pains to make known ever more and more the holy and life-giving principles of the Gospel, and affording assistance to their Bishops and priests in the work of spreading the faith and diffusing the benefits which flow from Christian charity, both for individuals and for society."

The Holy Father, who favors the noble Chinese people with a special predilection, rejoices at this most recent generous and prompt response to his august invitation made by the numerous flourishing Chinese Missions. He holds it for certain, moreover, that under the guidance of its capable pastors, Catholic Action will become an ever more efficacious instrument for drawing this vast nation to Christ, and for securing most certainly the prosperity of its people.

For if Catholic Action, by which the laity share in the apostolic hierarchy of the Church, and assist in spreading its sacred ministry, if Catholic Action is necessary, and has no substitute in Christian nations, it is still more urgently needed and has still greater power for good in those localities where the principles of a more intensely Christian life are just beginning to be known.

For not only is Catholic Action one of those things which afford the faithful a firm grounding in their faith—since by it they are brought to hold in high esteem the divine gift of faith, and to fulfill in particular its obligations of social justice—but it also gives them the training they need in order to be able effectively to draw to the laws and doctrine of the Gospel those who in the ordinary course of things will never come in contact with the missionaries.

It is perfectly obvious, therefore, how much more necessary Catholic Action is in this country than in others. For where else is there so vast a population as in China, which contains one-fourth of the earth's inhabitants? And how can the missionaries reach these immense multitudes to bring them the light of truth and blessings of grace? It is most evident that fervent Catholics must consider it a vital necessity to join the groups of Catholic Action so that they may become the apostles of their countrymen, and the eager imitators of those resourceful co-operators with St. Paul, who labored with him in the Gospel.

There is no doubt, in any case, that success will follow, and a more widespread movement towards the Church will take place when the Catholics of China become inflamed with a prudent apostolic spirit, and acquire a profound realization of their vocation. And if, by serious effort and with enlightened zeal, the spread of Catholic Action is promoted, all this will be very easily obtained. For Catholic Action is well adapted to the Chinese people, who, as their glorious history down the centuries well proves, are perhaps more inclined than others to live and work in various kinds of groups and societies.

And if the Catholics of China generously do their part for the establishment of Catholic societies, they may be sure that they are not only benefiting their own souls, but also aiding in the progress and prosperity of their country. For true national culture and refinement flow in a special way from a thorough understanding and a courageous practice of the precepts of Christian morality. The more Catholic Action is spread in the extended mission of China, so much the more will the holy religion of Christ be strengthened and safeguarded — that religion in which have been placed the hopes and aspirations of the vast nation for whom God in His Providence is preparing better times.

Finally, as a pledge of heavenly blessings and as an inspiration to the work in hand, the Holy Father imparts an ample paternal benediction to Your Excellency — the soul of the striking advances that are being made in China; to each of the Most Reverend Ordinaries, to whom he most earnestly recommends this sacred work; and finally to all the faithful who have already taken their place in the battle line of Catholic Action Associations; also to those who in greater numbers will later join the associations, and bring with them the promising contribution of their earnest zeal.

Wishing you every blessing, and assuring Your Excellency of my own sentiments of personal esteem, I remain

Your Excellency's most devoted servant,

CARLO SALOTTI,

Titular Bishop of Philipopolis,

Secretary of the Sacred Congregation of Propaganda.

II. LETTER OF THE APOSTOLIC DELEGATE

Apostolic Delegation in China,

Pekin, January 6, 1933.

To the Most Reverend Ordinaries of China:

Greeting:

The new statutes of Catholic Action, amended in a few points on the recommendation of the Most Reverend Ordinaries of China, have been revised and approved by the Sacred Congregation of Propaganda Fide.

They are promulgated by their publication in the January issue of the Collectanea. On the command and with the blessing of the Holy Father, and due consideration being made for the circumstances and opportunities of the various localities, they are now to be put into practice.

As I have already directed in my letter of May 30 (n.454/32): "It cannot all be put in practice in all places; but still the organization has been so outlined and provided for that whenever even the smallest association is founded it is to have its own distinct form, and to depend on its own Directive Council."

What should be sought is not merely numbers, but quality, so that the members of Catholic Action be outstanding Catholics, imbued with a true Christian spirit.

Old associations are considered dissolved, with the object that new ones be formed according to the present statutes.

At the proper time the General Directive Board will be named and published.

- CELSUS COSTANTINI,
Archbishop of Theodosopolis,
Apostolic Delegate.

THE EARTH PROCLAIMS HIS GLORY

St. Paul already speaks of the inexcusableness of those who do not admit God in the face of the eloquence of nature around us. There are many instances in history of the power of nature to lift one to God, and recently we came upon one that is striking.

Voltaire was eighty one years old and had never seen the sun rise in the Jura mountains. He was told that no one should miss that marvellous spectacle, so he agreed with a young nobleman to pass the night high up in the mountains and early the next morning be at hand to see the sight.

When they arrived at the mountain peak, the dawn was already purpling the eastern horizon; soon the Swiss Alps were aglow with the dawn, and the sun appeared across the mountains, touching every peak and crevice with such beauty that the aged Voltaire sank to his knees. He took off his hat, and gazed as one enraptured at the beauty that lay before him. Then and there, he dictated a poem with all his youthful vigor and power, and each strophe of that poem ended with the words:

Mighty God! I believe, I believe!
Never again will I doubt that Thou art!

Gathered at Dawn

SANCTITY AMONG OUR CHILDREN

PETER J. ETZIG, C.Ss.R.

XLI

In the little Italian town of Alba, in the Piedmontese district, some 40 miles southeast of Turin, a great work to foster the cause of the Catholic Press is being done. The Pious Society of St. Paul was organized some years ago and is meeting with notable success. This society unites priests and laymen into one religious community with the avowed purpose of furthering a better Catholic Press. Boys are accepted by the Institution at the age of twelve or later, and are taught journalism or printing just as the talent of the applicant may direct. Hand in hand with this development there is a thorough religious education as will be seen from the lad who forms the subject of the present sketch. The purpose of the entire institution is to write, print, and diffuse papers, books and pamphlets on religion, or as an official work on the matter puts it: "To preach Christian truth by the press as priests do by word of mouth." There is a definite course of studies, followed by a novitiate, and two sections to the institute, one for men and one for women. The men are divided into two classes or sections: Lay cooperators and Students; the women into Pious Disciples and Daughters of St. Paul. The lad whose life we are about to narrate, was sent to this institute in Alba and spent all his life there, giving evidence of a remarkable sanctity, and showing the excellent training that the Society of St. Paul tends to give to its applicants.

MAGGIORINO VIGOLUNGO, 1904-1918

Maggiorino Vigolungo was born on May 6, 1904, in the little town of Benevello, near Alba. His parents, Francesco Vigolungo and Secundina Caldellara were pious God-fearing people, as were all the inhabitants of the little place. The lad was baptized two days later in the parish Church by Don Luigi Brovia, who being pastor for many years at this place, had been responsible for the fine Catholicity and sincere piety of the inhabitants of Benevello.

AWAKENING IDEALS

The boy showed a remarkable memory and a good intelligence, and was somewhat precocious. But he was typically an Italian boy with his

lively imagination and almost irrepressible life. He was a perpetual question mark, and nothing seemed to escape the little black eyes. His little outbreaks of subdued temper and occasional dashes of anger, together with other manifestations made during these early years, caused two of his masters to say: "Maggiorino will either give great sorrow or cause great consolation, just as he shall be brought up." This tendency to produce the "great" showed itself in his passion for exactitude and punctuality, in his being engrossed with the work of the present moment, in his native restlessness with anything that looked in the least static.

It was therefore fortunate for the boy that his early education was of the best and his family surroundings of the deepest faith. It will therefore cause no wonder, if quite early in life he had ideals to be a saint, a priest, a savior of souls, an apostle of the Press. These things so attracted him that he began to be completely absorbed in work, and took little part in the games of his companions. This boyish seriousness showed itself also in his great interest in the spiritual things that he heard from the lips of his parents—he seemed to live the things he heard; and also in the impression of reverence he never failed to show when he entered a church.

SCHOOLING

When six years old, the lad was sent to the school of Pierina Pusieri. He showed himself here to be quite diligent. As is usual with the little children of this series, he early manifested his preference for the catechism. This was so marked and successful that he was admitted very early to Holy Communion. It was characteristic of the boy that his preparation for Holy Communion should be very thorough. For the time being, all restlessness and vivacity seemed to disappear—he seemed to realize what Communion really meant. The Sacrament of Confirmation was received with the same spirit and thoroughness, so that after this event that wholeheartedness with which he performed each act, whether serious or recreational, became a distinctive mark of his character.

Maggiorino was easy to get along with, although he was not free from all faults. His biography reveals him as a lad of very great tenderness of conscience, which would certainly have led him into scrupulosity had he not had such prudent guides during his stay at the Institute. The boy was very lively and loved to play jokes on others;

he could be a real "cut-up," and was first in his games whenever he did play. But when caught in a fault, he became very penitent, and would even ask his mother for some sort of penance to make up for it. As is the case with all these manly little fellows, he knew how to ask pardon. Yet with all this overflow of life, a sign from his parents could call him away from a game immediately, and duty could silence his clattering feet and hush his voice, as was particularly evidenced one time when his mother was sick and he played the nurse.

He very early showed a love for prayer, performing his little daily devotions with a recollection and reverence that was really remarkable. In time he became a server at the altar, as well as a member of the choir. He had a great memory for the sermons that he heard, and would come home and mount a chair and preach the word of God to his brothers and sisters. He could give point for point and noted parts of the sermons in his little note books word for word.

FORMING IDEALS

As he approached his twelfth year, the possibilities of the future began to present themselves.

"Have you ever thought of what you intend to do when you grow up?" he was asked. The boy became thoughtful, and did not know how to answer. He seemed to have deeper feelings than he could express. Yet it was clear that he wanted to be a little more than a mere priest, but he was not sure just what that was to be. His staying around home had not brought him into contact with the movement for a better Press, but when he did come into contact with it, he found there the fusion of teacher and priest, and an apostleship which fit his yearnings perfectly.

It was on October 15, 1916, that Maggiorino's parents brought him to Alba and had him enter the Typographical School, as it was then called. Later it was known as the Pious Society of St. Paul. Here with about thirty boys he was taught journalism and the art of printing. At the time of the boy's entry, it was doubtful whether he could stay, for the parents were obliged to pay something towards the education of the boy and Signor Vigolungo was sick, while the eldest boy had to serve in the army; — but still, the parents found ways and means and the lad began his apprenticeship.

One cannot help admiring the fine method of spiritual formation pursued at the Institute. By nature, Maggiorino was little given to sin-

gularity. He did as the others did, but as perfectly as possible. This was manifested in his devotions, for he had few special devotions. There was, of course, the devotion to the Madonna, to St. Joseph and to St. Paul, but these were the common devotions of all the boys.

Each morning the boys were required to make a twelve minute meditation, in which a rather rigid method was taught them. In the workshop all the boys would momentarily cease working at the stroke of the half-hour to make an ejaculatory prayer. Besides this, the boy early accustomed himself to the frequent use of those short prayers, twenty-two of which are listed by his biographer.

His conscience was exceedingly delicate, and the least thing that was not exactly correct would cause him to fear. But this fear was not allowed to dominate him and little by little his viewpoint was educated to distinguish correctly. This delicacy would be manifested in his anxiety whether wasting a folio of paper should keep him from Holy Communion. And one time he even thought of leaving the institute because when folding paper his mind would be assailed by doubts of faith and they seemed so vivid that he almost felt actually soiled by them. His vivid nature laid him open to temptations against the holy virtue, but the devotion of the three Hail Marys was his protection.

His devotion to the Madonna was worthy of the heritage of his forbears. He was particularly anxious never to be without his scapular medal; he performed some small sacrifice each Saturday, and said the Rosary every day. Whilst working in the printing room his foreman noticed that he often raised his eyes to an image of the Madonna that hung near him. One day the conversation of the boys drifted on to the Madonna, when suddenly Maggiorino exclaimed:

"O how good the Madonna is! She is our Mamma; how we ought to love her!"

His neighbor was for him in reality the very image of Jesus. One Sunday evening, he gave a lengthy conference to his companions on that topic, and the ideas noted of this occurrence show some mature understanding of his spiritual doctrine. His extreme cleanliness and order made him very averse to loaning any of his note books to any of the other boys. But upon being told that this would be a good form of charity, he made no further objection. The feelings of envy which rise so easily in a child's heart, were sternly dealt with by him, so that he easily overcame any show of it. Although rigorous with himself in the

matter of taking blame and making accusation of a fault, he was extremely apologetic for any body else.

"Poor fellows," he said of some youngsters who had made fun of his piety, "they have never been taught any different!"

The boy said himself that he had a "good dose of pride," which showed itself in his insistence on his own views, his defense of his own works, his trying too ambitious things. But these were soon controlled by his Director, who saw that all were but the result of ungoverned zeal.

A peculiar trait of this boy may be said to be his constant remembrance of death. Young life hardly ever thinks of death, but his notebook has some interesting things on the last things of man.

"Remember that it is possible to die from one moment to another; one must always be prepared."

"Let us often think of the shame that our sins would cause us on the day of judgment."

"Above the gates of hell one could write: always and never: that is, one shall always remain here, one shall never leave here."

In order to keep this idea before him he had a picture of a tomb which he often looked at.

Thus Maggiorino was steadily approaching the ideal which he never lost sight of. This ideal he expressed in 1917 in his notes on a retreat that was given to the boys:

"With the help of God and under the protection of St. Paul, I intend and resolve to consecrate my entire life to the Apostolate of the Press."

The retreat must have had much to say about the immediate object of the Society, for we find quite a few notations bearing on the importance of the Press.

"The Press is a first power, it directs the world."

"The importance of the Apostolate of the Press is immense in our times."

"Let us stamp out the bad Press for it is a scourge worse than pestilence, famine and war."

This love for his vocation gave him a great reverence for books and the printed page. He had the highest respect for the Sacred Scriptures, and when it was his turn to read a small section as was the custom at the opening of each class in the Institute, the boy's face was alight with

pleasure. His great love for the Sacred Books was based on the fact, as he once told his companions, that Scripture is not the book of a man but the book of God. He too had impressed upon his own mind the words of St. Augustine: "We should have the same care for the fragments of the Sacred Scripture, as we have for the fragments of the Holy Eucharist."

The boys at the Institute learned just why one should have such great respect for the Press, for that which they wrote or printed would have an audience not of a thousand as a preacher might but of ten thousand. Thus each boy became an Apostle by conviction, and this conviction became the basis for their activity in the writing or setting up or printing and binding of good Catholic literature. What the activity of the Institute must have been can be gauged from the fact that at least 20 periodicals came from it each month.

TOWARDS THE END

It has been remarked in these sketches that quite often the boy or girl would have some unaccountable presentiment of death. This same forewarning may have come to our lad, for his notes for January, 1918, end with these words: "Paradise! Paradise! Eternal happiness!! Behold what awaits me!"

But whether or not this be some presentiment, the boy gave signs of failing health. Man that he was, he never complained — he never would talk about himself. His appetite, games, and appearance were all good, but his work and walks fatigued him quite appreciably. But one day, he could not go on any more and said to his foreman:

"See, I do not feel well. . . . But please do not mention it to anyone."

But the malady went on and the doctors found some affection of pleuritis. He was allowed to be taken home, where he remained for the rest of his days. He suffered very much so that his lungs had to be tapped, but his favorite prayer: "May the Holy Will of God be done" was always on his lips. The boy however recovered to such an extent as to make a visit to the Institute in June, and every hope was had that he would soon return to his companions.

God, however, disposed otherwise. A relapse set in and on July 18, the first indications of meningitis were discerned. Soon all hope of recovery was abandoned, and Viaticum and Extreme Unction were given. Maggiorino lay there in perfect peace and answered all the prayers clearly and distinctly. He knew he was going to die, but death for him

was but the entrance into glory. At this time his Director from the Institute came to see him. Part of their conversation has been preserved:

"Do you wish to be cured or to go to Paradise?"

"It is all the same to me."

"But here on earth you can still gain merit; though there is also the danger of committing sin."

"If the Lord wishes me to work a bit more, I am ready; otherwise I die willingly."

"What then do you desire?"

"To do the Will of God. But tell me: is it better to ask to be cured or to die?"

"Ask only to do the Will of God, and meanwhile prepare yourself to die."

No matter how the question was put, there was always the same reply: the Will of God! How well that lad had learned the basic lesson of all life!

For four days, Maggiorino lay in his agony, while the boys at the Institute prayed for him before the Blessed Sacrament. For three days there was uninterrupted prayer asking for a cure should that be the Will of God. The triduum ended at six o'clock in the evening of July 27, and while all his companions were reciting the fourth glorious mystery of the rosary, Maggiorino sank back into the pillow, lifeless. It was a Saturday — Our Lady's day, and the Mystery told of her Assumption into heaven. Maggiorino was fourteen years, two months and twenty-three days old.

AFTER DEATH

The body lay in state surrounded by lilies and roses, an object of respect to the crowds who filed past it. His virtues became a topic for the Sunday sermons at the parish church. On Monday there was a solemn requiem Mass, the funeral sermon being by Father Alberioni, S.S.P., who later (1932) became the boy's biographer. Burial took place in the Campo Santo of the village amid an immense crowd of people. The occasion was indeed heavy with sorrow, but not entirely lacking in joy, so that Signora Vigolungo acknowledged: "Piango e rido" (I grieve and I smile).

Some favors have already been recorded, but the greatest of his favors will ever be the fine incentive his life has given to the boys at the Typographical School and the world over.

Catholic Anecdotes

HOW SAINTS SUFFER

When Mother Ignace, called the third founder of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, was dying, she suffered intensely. One day the convent chaplain, evidently trying to prepare her to be resigned for a continuance of her pain, or to present the example of her resignation to her subjects, said to her:

"Reverend Mother, if it should please God to let the suffering continue for several days, would you submit to His Holy Will?"

The answer came without hesitation:

"I should continue to suffer like this till the Day of Judgment, if such were God's good pleasure."

After a moment she added:

"What distresses me is not the sufferings of my poor body, but the thought that Our Lord's blood has been shed in vain for thousands of souls that go to hell! Would that I could save them all!"

THE POWER OF PRAYER

Some years ago a priest was called to a dying man. He was a stranger who had fallen ill while passing through the town.

On seeing the priest, he flew into a rage:

"What do you want; who sent for you?" he shouted.

"These good people have sent for me," replied the priest, "perhaps I can assist you."

"You can do nothing for me," answered the man. "No priest, no bishop, not even the Pope can help me." And he poured forth a torrent of blasphemy.

The priest showed the dying man the crucifix, and spoke to Him of God's infinite mercy and love, but he covered his ears with his hands and continued his abusive language. At last, turning to the people gathered around the bed, the priest said:

"Let us kneel down and pray for this poor sinner."

All promptly fell on their knees and began to pray fervently. The sick man continued to shout above their voices, but gradually he became calm, and as the people recited aloud the Memorare, he began to weep.

"O my God, O my God, is there any hope for me? Will God really forgive me?"

The people left the room, and the dying man made a good confession.

REJECTING BELIEF

The attitude of materialism towards miracles and the supernatural is well exemplified by an incident in the Life of Emile Zola, famous French novelist and "prince of realists."

Zola had visited Lourdes, and while there had witnessed the miraculous cure of a woman who had suffered for a long time from tuberculosis. The woman lived many years after her cure in perfect health.

In his next novel, however, Zola wrote up the case, with only one change: the woman, on her return home from Lourdes, was described as suffering a relapse, during which she died. When he was taxed with this perversion of the truth by the chief physician of Lourdes, who had granted him every opportunity to study the whole case, the novelist cried out in annoyance:

"I suppose I am the master of the persons in my own books, and can let them live or die as I choose." Then he added these words: "Besides, I don't believe in miracles; even if all the sick in Lourdes were cured in a moment, I would not believe."

INCORRUPT

An anecdote that might well be pondered by politicians and public officials in these days of bribery and corruption is that which is related of Blessed Thomas More.

A certain man, who was about to prosecute a suit in the court over which More presided, sent him two large silver wine goblets, thinking thus to gain him to his side.

The great Englishman had a sense of humor along with his sense of justice; so he filled the vessels with some of his choicest wine, and sent them back to the donor, with the message:

"Sir, all the wine in my cellars is at your disposal."

IN THE HANDS AND ON THE HEART

When Mary Stuart, the unfortunate queen of Scotland, was on the scaffold, she held a crucifix in her hands. An Anglican minister standing nearby, told her to put away this "papist superstition," adding that she would do better to have the emblem of salvation imprinted on her heart rather than held in her hands.

"How," was her reply, "can I hold the image of my Crucified Lord in my hands, without having that same image imprinted on my heart?"

Pointed Paragraphs

INTERPRETING CATHOLIC PRESS MONTH

Bewailing the lack of support of the Catholic Press in the columns of a Catholic publication would be like belaboring a small crowd of worshippers present at a Church service on account of the many who were absent. After all, those who read these lines, do not need pep talks and dissertations on the need, helpfulness, and blessings of the Catholic Press; they are its supporters and deserve congratulation.

It is good, however, that we mutually rejoice in the good that is being done by our cooperative efforts, and encouraged to extend our influence to the best of our ability.

Distinct triumphs have been registered by the Catholic Press as a whole during the past year. Among them were the progress made by the Legion of Decency against unclean movies, which would have been impossible without the aid of the Catholic papers and magazines; the awakening of a widespread public sense of protest against the outrages being perpetrated against religion in Mexico, which should eventually culminate in official action against the same; the silencing of the anti-religious broadcasts known as the Judge Rutherford Watch Tower programs; and the bringing to an end of the unfair restrictions against Catholic boys and the exercise of their faith on the part of the chocolate magnate, M. S. Hershey, in the orphanage his money had erected.

All these are social achievements that had their effect not only on the Catholic populace, but on the non-Catholic as well. Just the suggestion of what greater things might be accomplished if Catholic support of the Catholic Press were more unanimous, is sufficient to arouse a spirit of zeal.

The social and public aims of the Catholic Press are of course only a part of its program and past service. The *LIGUORIAN* takes special pride in the number of letters it has received from individuals crediting it with true inspirational, educational and recreational value. We ask no more than to be enabled to continue being, to the best of our powers, an organ of the Catholic Press in general, and a source of pleasure and assistance to every individual reader.

ENCOURAGING FACTS

We have always mistrusted and disliked the efforts made by some publicity organs during the depression era to stimulate confidence and optimism in the public mind when there were no grounds for optimism. These efforts were based too evidently on the philosophy that the depression was simply a mental state, to be met by mental restoratives alone. A pleasant theory which assured the unjust capitalist that he would not have to change his methods.

But a recent survey of conditions, resultant from New Deal efforts by and large, gives genuine grounds for hope. An article in *Editor and Publisher* just at the beginning of the year states as follows:

"Correspondents (in Washington) of all political colors, united in citing these factual pieces of evidence that, viewing the government from close range as well as in the light of past administrations in the last 25 years, progress toward recovery from that rockbottom day of March 4, 1933, is actually being made:

1. Increased income taxes, particularly from corporations.
2. 3,000,000 back to work.
3. Farm income is up about 25 per cent as a general average. Farmers comprise 40 per cent of the population.
4. Biggest Christmas business throughout the country in five years.
5. Biggest automobile sales in 1934 than in any of five preceding years."

Apparently, some of the efforts being made have worked out and are working out to a betterment of conditions.

THE DEPTHS OF HATRED

The papers are full, these days, of the outrages being perpetrated against Catholics in Mexico. Archbishops and bishops are being driven out of the country; priests hounded, hampered, harassed in every conceivable way; Catholic schools suppressed and their holdings confiscated; children corrupted by the sex teachings of state schools; the Catholic laity forced into anti-religious demonstrations and penalized and persecuted for every least sign of adherence to the faith of their fathers.

Amongst all the evidences of religious hatred in Mexico, there is one that is significant of the human depths into which its leaders have plunged. It is the driving out of the Little Sisters of the Poor. In itself, this is a small thing as compared with murder, imprisonment and corrup-

tion; yet it shows that not only nothing religious but nothing *good* is held sacred in that ill-fated land.

Other persecutors have tried to drive the Catholic Church from the face of the earth; yet often they stopped at the door of the Little Sisters of the Poor. Others have hated the Catholic religion; but they doffed their hats and bowed in reverence before the work done by these Sisters. Pagans and atheists, criminals and scoffers have been known to contribute to a work they could not understand but were forced to admire.

But in Mexico, the Little Sisters must go, and even the old and the feeble and the dying, with none to think of them or provide for them but these Sisters, must not be allowed so close to anything that has a tinge of faith.

So the Sisters have embarked for Cuba and Spain. They left secretly, without even saying good-bye to their old charges, thus with charity to the end trying to spare them the pain of such a parting. Now the old folks can die in misery but in peace; they have helped save the state from the Little Sisters of the Poor.

OVER-STRENUOUS LIVES

For the first time, since women's organizations, clubs, leagues, unions, circles, have been universal and all absorbing, we note a publicly expressed reaction on the part of women themselves. In the January *Forum* and in the February *Ladies' Home Journal* women take up their pens to defend what might have been called heresy in the heyday of the New Freedom.

The *Journal* article is entitled, "On Being Private-Spirited." It is refreshingly against the feverish and useless activities to which so many women give themselves outside their homes.

"Many a woman's public-spiritedness," the writer says, "began in college by 'going out for activities'," — to the effect that by graduation time she had forgotten the purpose of college. "Then she married and settled down, but she was about as much settled as boiled coffee without the egg. She rushed breathlessly around administering artificial respiration through alumnae clubs to dying collegiate attachments. Or she did church work, perspiringly organizing groups to foster fellowship among other members who vastly preferred to be left alone. Or she joined clubs to study international relations and child psychology, until she had no time to study her own private relationships and the problems of her own particular children . . .

"Oddly enough, *being* has often been quite overlooked in the modern feminine cult, so busy have women been in *doing*. Yet one serene, rested woman, whose home and whose smile are inviting, can sometimes do as much in a community as a whole dozen harassed Madame Presidents rushing about in search of a quorum.

"What shall women do with their new leisure? . . . There are many things to fill it with besides bridge and lending-library novels. Wouldn't it be fun once in a while just to sit and admire a delphinium stalk, without a single hectoring thought of engagement pads? Or to look forward to a whole string of evenings at home, interrupted only by the rattle of husband's newspaper and the buzz of the children's homework? Or to have time to cultivate old friendships with other women, a knack that seems to have been lost somewhere along the path of progress? . . ."

The article in the *Forum* is entitled "Why Be a Club Woman?" and with devastating comment presents the thesis that clubs, even federated unions of clubs, are impotent to accomplish anything really worthwhile.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

Omaha Catholics set an example to the world on New Year's Eve of 1935. While thousands were noisily and many, perhaps, sinfully celebrating the dawn of the New Year, members of the Nocturnal Adoration Society of Omaha were engaged in a religious "watch service" at Blessed Sacrament Church in that city.

The service opened at 10 P. M. when the first of eight bands of watchers, gathered from 22 Omaha parishes, assembled in the church for the reception of 14 new members into the society.

At the start of every hour a new group of members took their stations in the church to recite the Rosary and other vocal prayers. The last group came at five A. M. and closed their vigil at six o'clock, remaining for the first Mass of the day.

There is a reminder here of the strong medieval Catholicism which inaugurated the Forty Hours' Devotion on the carnival days preceding Lent to make reparation for the sins committed during that time. Societies for perpetual adoration of the Blessed Sacrament are spreading and growing through the country; they give evidence of intense Catholic life of which Americans can be proud.

.....LIGUORIANA.....

EXCERPTS FROM THE WRITINGS OF ST. ALPHONSUS

PURIFICATION

Mary had given her consent to the death of Jesus at the very moment she became His Mother; but Almighty God

From "Glories of Mary" willd that on the day of the Purification she should make a special solemn sacrifice of the precious life of her Child, offering Him as a victim to the Divine Justice. Thinking of this solemn sacrifice she made, St. Epiphanius called her "the Virgin Priestess."

Let us try to realize what agony this sacrifice cost her, and what heroic virtue she had to practice when she fulfilled the duty imposed upon her of signing the death warrant of her own dear Jesus.

See her as she makes her way towards Jerusalem, hastening her steps to the place of sacrifice, carrying the beloved Victim in her arms.

See her enter the temple, approach the altar, and there, full of modesty, humility, and piety, present her Child to the Most High.

Holy Simeon, who had been promised by God that he would not die until he had seen the longed-for Messias, takes the Child from her arms, and, enlightened by the Holy Ghost, tells her how much this sacrifice of her Son that she was now making would one day cost her, when she would have to sacrifice to God His very life.

The Blessed Virgin had herself long since been enlightened, through her reading of Holy Scripture, to know how much the Redeemer of the world would

have to suffer during His life and especially at His death.

But when Simeon pronounced those words: "Thine own soul a sword shall pierce," it was given to her to see (as God revealed to St. Theresa) just what would be the particular circumstances of each of these sufferings,—the circumstances outside Our Lord, of the hatred and malice of His enemies, and all the particular torments they would inflict upon Him; and also the circumstances within Our Lord,—just how He would be afflicted in His sensitive soul by all these outrages.

And she consented to it all. She consented, and with a firmness that made the angels hold their peace in wonder, she pronounced the death sentence of her own Child; the sentence by which He was to die so shameful and agonizing a death: the death of the cross. "Father, not my will, but Thine, be done." "I unite my will with Thy Holy Will, and I sacrifice to Thee this my Son; I am willing to see Him die for Thy glory and the salvation of the world. And together with His life, I sacrifice to Thee my own heart; pierce it with sorrow according to Thy good pleasure; I am satisfied as long as Thou, my God, art glorified and pleased. Not my will, but Thine, be done."

Let us join with the angels, and marvel in wordless admiration at the immeasurable love for God, the unparalleled bravery of this young Mother—of this little Maiden—our own Lady and Mother, Mary!

Book Reviews

APOLOGETICS

CATHOLIC MEXICO. By Edward Lodge Curran. Published by The International Catholic Truth Society, 407 Bergen St., Brooklyn, N. Y., 1934. 24 pages. Price: 10 cents each; 12 for \$1.00; 50 for \$4.00; 100 for \$7.00.

This brief pamphlet is evidently the result of serious study and the author merits a well-deserved word of thanks. To be appreciated, his work must be read carefully and attentively. Short, yet complete and convincing. What did the Catholic Church ever accomplish in Mexico? Here is an answer: read it. May we hope that the author will develop his thesis in a larger work?

Dr. Curran concludes this unusual and remarkable study with: "The Verdict: The Catholic Church guided the progress of Mexico, despite civil absolutism, from 1524 to 1824. She offers no apology for the glorious history of those golden years of triumph in Mexico. The Catholic Church has been refused the slightest leadership or direction in the past hundred years of Mexico's enthralment. Therefore, she is absolved of all responsibility for the condition of Mexico today. Others must apologize for the history of those red and purple years of tragedy in Mexico." The pamphlet is being distributed free among non-Catholics in the United States, and is being translated into Spanish to be distributed among Catholics and non-Catholics in Mexico. Those who wish to aid this important work may become a "Defender of Mexico" by contributing \$1.00 to the cause, to be sent to the address as above. — *M. S. B.*

THE CHURCH AND THE WORLD. By Martin J. Scott, S.J., Litt.D. Published by P. J. Kenedy and Sons. New York. 262 pages. Price: paper binding, 25 cents, postpaid, 35 cents; cloth binding, \$1.50, postpaid, \$1.65.

In his usual simple, direct language, Father Scott lays before the reader the inescapable facts that substantiate the position of the Catholic Church on the questions that are of primary interest to man. Free will, authority in religion, the Church and Science, the Church and Birth-control, the Church and Marriage,

— these are some of the absorbing topics on which the light of plain facts and common sense reasoning is shed for the man who thinks. As with all of Father Scott's books, there is nothing technical or esoteric about the manner of presentation; in fact to the trained theological mind, the frequent repetitions and restatements may seem unnecessary; but experience has shown that his method has a striking and lasting effect on the lay mind. — *D. F. M.*

SOCIOLOGY

SOCIOLOGY: A class manual in the philosophy of human society. By Paul J. Glenn, Ph.D., S.T.D. Published by B. Herder Book Co., St. Louis, 1935. vii-409 pages. Price. \$2.00 net.

The author has found it necessary or convenient to burden his manual with digests of Theology and Moral Philosophy which are at once too brief in treatment for adequate grasp by the uninitiated, and much too extended in page-space (better than a hundred pages) for an introduction to sociological science. Even after the book professedly launches into sociology, about eighty five pages are devoted to a brief review of certain psychological and ethical considerations of human personality. As a result of this arrangement we are introduced to the social man as such on page 210.

The professedly sociological part of the book is sketchy and the book as a whole is *preachy* in the extreme.

RELIGION

HOLINESS AND HAPPINESS. Compiled and edited by F. X. Lasance. Published by Benziger Bros. 261 pages. 24mo, imitation leather, long grain, square corners, gold top. Price, \$2.00.

A beautifully prepared little volume, about the size of a prayer-book, crammed with thought-provoking and joy-inspiring passages from the writings of saints and thinkers, and the well-known fervent paragraphs of Father Lasance. Each chapter is a short but complete whole, suitable as the point for a meditation, or for an inspiring thought for the day. An appropriate summary of prayers for attendance at Holy Mass is included in the book. — *D. F. M.*



Catholic Events



Persons:

Francis Cardinal Bourne, Archbishop of Westminster, England, died of heart disease on January 1st. He was the 4th archbishop of the primatial See in England over the period of 85 years since the restoration of the English hierarchy by Pope Pius IX in 1850. His predecessors were the famous Cardinals Wiseman, Manning and Vaughan.

The Right Rev. Abbot Edmund M. Obrecht, mitred head of the Trappist Abbey of Our Lady of Gethsemani, near Bardstown, Kentucky, died January 4th at the age of 83 in his room at the monastery. He was installed as Abbot of Gethsemani in 1898; had been the friend of every Pope in the last 50 years; had personally known St. John Bosco and the Sisters of the Little Flower, and left behind him an enviable record of accomplishment, charity, and religious fervor and zeal.

Arthur Preuss, editor of the well-known Catholic periodical, the *Fortnightly Review*, author of the famous work on American Freemasonry, the most authentic and complete work of its kind, translator of many important theological works, compiler of the Dictionary of Secret and Other Societies, and militant Catholic layman, died at Jacksonville, Florida, on December 16th, 1934. He was buried from St. Rose's Church, St. Louis, Missouri, where his life had been spent in retirement, in study and work. Three brothers, priests, took part in the funeral service, and a large number of the clergy attended.

The Most Rev. James O'Reilly, bishop of Fargo, North Dakota, died at the age of 77 on December 19th. He had been bishop of the See just 25 years and a day.

The Most Rev. Francis M. Redwood, archbishop of Wellington, New Zealand, died in his episcopal city on January 3rd at the age of 95 years. He had been the youngest bishop in the universal Church, at the time of his consecration, and was the oldest at the time of his death. He celebrated a diamond episcopal jubilee in February, 1934.

The Right Rev. Monsignor R. A. Kearney, Chancellor of the diocese of Brooklyn, has been named auxiliary bishop of that See, and thereby becomes the youngest bishop in the country. He was born in 1903, and ordained in 1927, having received his doctorate in theology from the Propaganda College in Rome.

Ivar Tidestrom, noted botanist and for more than 20 years a member of the United States Department of Agriculture, was received into the Catholic Church in the Chapel of St. Anselm's Priory, Washington, D. C., during December. He was born in Sweden over 60 years ago, but studied at the Catholic University in Washington under Professor Edward L. Greene, most famous botanist of his time.

John O. Riedl, of the department of Philosophy at Marquette University, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, was elected President of the American Catholic Philosophical Association at its annual meeting in Chicago, December 30th. *The Rev. John J. Toohey, S.J.*, of Georgetown University, Washington, D. C., was named vice-president; and the Rev. Dr. Charles A. Hart of the Catholic University of America, secretary-treasurer.

Blessed John Fisher and Blessed Thomas More, English martyrs of the Reformation period, are expected to be canonized during the current year, which

marks the 400th anniversary of their martyrdom for upholding Papal supremacy. They will be, if the event comes to pass, the first English saints since the Reformation.

The Catholic Truth Guild of Boston, dedicated to the work of carrying the Catholic message to the man in the street, will hereafter be known as the *Campaigners for Christ*, according to a decision of His Eminence, Cardinal O'Connell of Boston. The new name was suggested in an open letter to similar organizations throughout the country, written by David Goldstein, pioneer in this kind of work, and director of the nation-wide series of lay street missions now in progress.

Nine Catholics are members of the United States Senate in the 74th Congress: *Walsh* of Massachusetts; *Ashurst* of Arizona; *Duffy* of Wisconsin; *Loneragan* and *Maloney* of Connecticut; *McCaron* of Nevada; *Murphy* of Iowa; *O'Mahoney* of Wyoming, and *Murray* of Montana.

Approximately 25,000 lepers are in the care of Catholic missionaries throughout the world, according to the latest figures prepared in Rome. There are 107 organized leper asylums, caring for 12,774 inmates, while almost an equal number are given help by hundreds of Mission stations throughout the leper areas of the world. Work for the lepers is regarded as one of the greatest privileges by Missionaries; heads of the various institutes declaring that hundreds of members volunteer for such work. Less than 1,000 priests, brothers and Sisters are in this field, however, limited in its development by lack of funds.

The Rev. Joseph Beine, C.Ss.R., died at the age of 52 on January 11th, in St. Mary's Hospital, Madison, Wisconsin. During his life as a Redemptorist, he had been professor in the Studendate and Juvenate, parish priest for a number of years at St. Alphonsus, Chicago, and Rector of the Mexican house of the Redemptorists in San Antonio, Texas. Much of his later life had been spent working for the unfortunate Mexicans of the Southwest. He was buried from the Seminary Chapel at Oconomowoc, Wisconsin.

Alfred E. Smith, as chairman of the Advisory Council of the Legion of Decency in New York, recently effected the barring of a foreign motion picture film which featured nudity. He sent a telegram to President Roosevelt, informing him that the picture had been condemned by religious authorities abroad, and that its introduction would tend to loosen the bars on moving pictures in general. The picture was barred by the Government.

Places:

In *Mexico*, the tensify of feeling occasioned by the continued persecution of Catholics has expressed itself in riots and encounters between officers of the state and crowds aroused over the merciless tactics employed against priests. Strict censorship of all news leaving the country is in force, so that accounts reaching the outside may be made to place Catholics in an unfavorable light in every disturbance.—The arm of Mexican persecution tried recently to reach over the border into the United States, when the Mexican consul tried to have a scheduled public celebration of the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe in San Bernardino, California, canceled, by appeal to the local authorities. He was sharply rebuked for his audacity.

In the *United States*, 29,000 men made retreats in 70 retreat houses throughout the country during the past year, according to a report made at the annual national conference of the Layman's Retreat Movement held at the Catholic University of America during late December.

L u c i d I n t e r v a l s

"Waiter," said the fussy diner, "I want some oysters. But they mustn't be too large or too small, too old or too tough, and they mustn't be salty. I want them cold and I want them at once."

"Yes, sir," bowed the waiter, "with or without pearls?"

*

A small boy was told that when visitors came to the house it was his duty to pay them some attention.

Shortly afterwards a Mrs. Daniel called, and the small boy shook hands with her politely and exclaimed in his best drawing-room manner:

"How do you do, Mrs. Daniel? I've just been reading about your husband in the den of lions."

*

A patronizing young lord was seated opposite the artist, James McNeill Whistler, at dinner one evening. During a lull in the conversation he adjusted his monocle and leaned toward the artist.

"Aw, y' know, Mr. Whistler," he drawled, "I pahssed your house this mawning."

"Thank you," said Whistler quietly. "Thank you very much."

*

Sopwith: "I hear that Harry and Sue are not on speaking terms any more. How did that happen?"

Skipwith: "Harry asked her what she thought would be the best thing to use on his head and she told him furniture polish."

*

A man who discovered that he was standing on a woman's train had the presence of mind to remark: "Though I may not have the power to draw an angel from the skies, I, at least, have pinned one to the earth." She excused him.

*

Silas and Tobias were run down and trampled by the same team of horses. As they lay on the ground, Silas set up a great wail, to silence which Tobias said:

"Stop yo' noise, Silas; you-all isn't de only one dat am dead."

The teacher had given out the subject "water" and asked the pupils to write a short composition on the subject. One boy had considerable trouble with his effort but this is what he wrote: "Water is a white wet liquid which turns black when you wash in it."

*

The exceedingly stout lady indignantly tackled a bus inspector at a busy stopping place.

"I want to report the conductor of that bus that's just gone," she shrieked. "He's been rude."

"How?" asked the bored official.

"Why," went on the lady, "when I got off he said, 'Room for three inside!'"

*

He: "Who spilled mustard on this waffle, dear?"

She: "O John! How could you! This is lemon pie!"

*

Judge: "You are accused of shooting squirrels out of season; is there any plea?"

Him: "Yessir judge, I plead self defense."

*

"Are you really a bank examiner, Mr. Tompkins?" asked the hostess.

"Yes, madam, I happen to be."

"Then I hope you will have time to examine the baby's bank. No matter how much we shake it, nothing ever comes out."

*

Mr. Smith was seeing a friend off to Denver: "Be sure to look up my friend, Mr. Lummac, while in the city."

"Mr. Lummac," answered the friend absent-mindedly.

"Yes, Mr. Lummac. That's easy to remember; just rhyme it with stomach."

A week later his friend returned and meeting Smith on the street:

"Sorry; I tried and tried, but I never could find that Mr. Kelly."

*

Seth: "Silas, do you like bananas?"

Silas (who is hard of hearing): "No indeed. I stick to the old-fashioned nightshirts."

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Motion Picture Guide

Consult the following list before attending the movies—and you will be faithful to your Legion of Decency Pledge!

CLASS A—*Pictures in this group are considered unobjectionable and suitable for public entertainment:*

The Age of Innocence	Home on the Range	Night Alarm
Among the Missing	House of Danger	One is Guilty
Anne of Green Gables	House of Rothschild	One Night of Love
Babbitt	The Human Side	Paradise Alley
Baboon	I'll Fix It	Phantom Express
Babes in Toyland	Imitation of Life	The Prescott Kid
Bachelor of Arts	In Love With Life	The President Vanishes
The Band Plays On	In Old Santa Fe	Romance in Manhattan
The Barretts of Wimpole Street	It's a Gift	The Rustlers of Red Dog
Big Hearted Herbert	Judge Priest	Secret Bride
Brand of Hate	Kentucky Kernels	Servants' Entrance
Bright Eyes	Kid Millions	Sequela
Bulldog Drummond Strikes Back	King Kelly of the U. S. A.	She had to Choose
The Catpaw	The Last Gentleman	(Revised)
Charlie Chan in London	The Lemon Drop Kid	The Silver Streak
Chu Chin Chow	The Lawless Frontier	6 Day Bike Rider
College Rhythm	Life of Our Saviour	Stolen Sweets
The Count of Monte Cristo	The Lives of a Bengal Lancer	Student Tour
The County Chairman	Little Men	Successful Failure
Cowboy Holiday	Life of Paul Canerdy	Sundown Trail
Devil's Canyon	The Little Minister	Sweet Adeline
Dude Ranger	Lost in the Stratosphere	Tailsipin Tommy
Embarrassing Moments	The Loudspeaker	365 Nights in Hollywood
Evergreen	Love Time	Tombstone Terror
The Fighting Trooper	Loser's End	Tomorrow's Youth
Father Brown, Detective	A Lost Lady	Too Busy to Work
Filtration Walk	Man of Aran	The Trail Beyond
Gentlemen Are Born	Manhattan Love Song	The Unconquered Bandit
Gift of Gab	The Man Who Reclaimed His Head	Unfinished Symphony
Girl of the Limerlost	Marie Galante	Wagon Wheels
Grand Old Girl	The Marines Are Coming	Wake Up and Dream
Great Expectations	Melody in Spring	Wandering Jew
Gridiron Flash	Menace	We're Rich Again
The Golden Goal	The Mighty Barnum	West of the Pecos
Happiness Ahead	Mother of the Company	The Westener
Happy Landing	Mrs. Wiggs of the Cabage Patch	What Every Woman Knows
Harold Teen	Murder in the Clouds	When a Man sees Red
Hell'dorado	Music in the Air	The White Cockatoo
Hell in the Heavens	Mystery Woman	The White Parade
Here is My Heart		A Wicked Woman
		Young and Beautiful

CLASS B—*Pictures in this group are considered more or less objectionable in SPOTS because of their possible suggestiveness or vulgarity or sophistication or lack of modesty. Neither approved nor forbidden but for adults only:*

Against the Law	Evelyn Prentice	The Party's Over
Adventure Girl	Filting With Danger	The Penal Code
All Quiet on the Western Front	Flying Down to Rio	Power
Bachelor Bait	Forsaking All Others	Pursued
The Best Man Wins	The Fountain	Pursuit of Happiness
Behold My Wife	Friends of Mr. Sweeney	Rawhide Mail
Biography of a Bachelor	Fugitive Lady	Ready for Love
Girl	Gambling	Red Head
Bordertown	The Gay Divorcee	Return of the Terror
Blind Date	Hide Out	The Richest Girl in the World
British Agent	I Am a Thief	The St. Louis Kid
Broadway Bill	I Sell Anything	The Scarlet Letter
By Your Leave	I've Been Around	Secret of the Chateau
The Captain Hates the Sea	I've Got Your Number	She Loves Me Not
The Case of the Howling Dog	Kansas City Princess	Stand Up and Cheer
Chained	The Lover from Vienna	Take the Stand
Cheating Cheaters	The Lottery Lover	Terror of the Plains
Cleopatra	The Man With Two Faces	There's Always Tomorrow
Courage of the North	The Merry Widow	Three on a Honeymoon
Crime Without Passion	Midnight Mary	Ticket to Crime
The Curtain Falls	Million Dollar Ransom	Transatlantic Merry-Go-Round
Dames	Mills of the Gods	Wednesday's Child
Dangerous Corner	Murder in Trinidad	When Strangers Meet
Dealers in Death	Murder on the Blackboard	Whirlpool
Death on the Diamond	Name the Woman	White Lies
Desirable	The Night is Young	Within the Rock
Don Quixote	Once to Every Bachelor	Woman in the Dark
Ellnor Norton	One in a Million	The World Accuses
Enter Madame	One Exciting Adventure	The World Moves On
	Outcast Lady	
	The Painted Veil	